

## Mismatch between theory and practice

Problem of determining base forms for Miyako verb

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### Goal

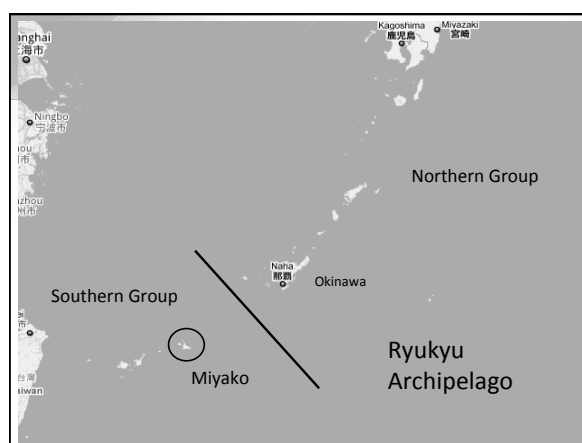
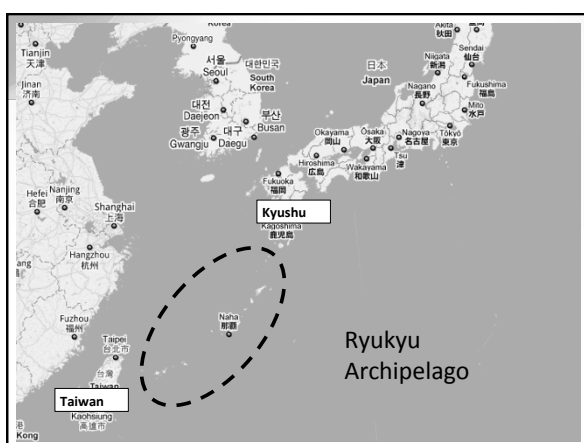
- ◉ Reexamine the link between linguists' grammar and speakers' understanding
  - ◉ descriptive framework; theoretical understanding of grammatical organization
  - ◉ reality of linguistic practice; speakers' intuition
- ◉ Is theory directly applicable to teaching and revitalization?

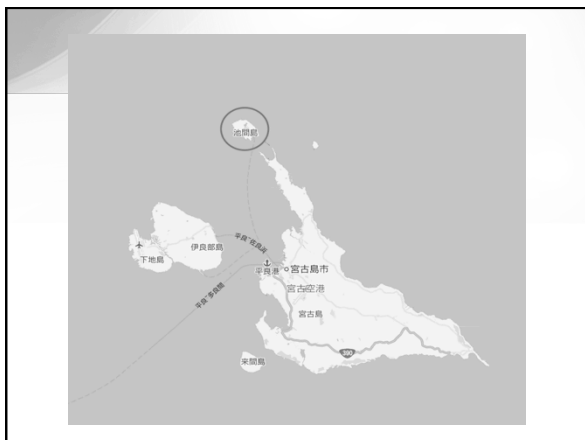
### Issue

- ◉ Difficulty in determining the 'base form' of a verb
  - ◉ What form is used as a representative form when a lexeme can take multiple forms (e.g. inflected forms)?
- ◉ Our experience in Miyako (Okinawa)

### About the language

- ◉ Miyako, Ikema dialect (Ryukyuan, Japonic)
- ◉ Spoken in the southern Ryukyus (Okinawa, Japan)
- ◉ Endangered:
  - ◉ 2000-3000 fluent speakers
  - ◉ Active use in generations above 60-65 years old
  - ◉ Daily lives are dominated by Japanese especially for younger generations
  - ◉ No children are growing up speaking it
  - ◉ No writing tradition





### ***Our work in Ikema Miyako***

- ⊙ Speakers
  - ⊙ 50's ~ 90's
- ⊙ Our activities
  - ⊙ recording various spoken discourse
    - ⊙ narratives, interviews, conversations, procedures
  - ⊙ collecting vocabulary items
  - ⊙ analyzing grammatical patterns & structure on the basis of the natural discourse data

### ***Our work in Ikema***

- ⊙ Our methodology
  - ⊙ Main focus on recording and analysis of natural discourse
  - ⊙ Supplemented by elicitation during transcription/translation sessions

### ***Ikema verb forms***

	<i>Stand</i>	<i>Go Out</i>
NON-PAST	<i>tats-i-Ø</i>	<i>idi-Ø</i>
PAST	<i>tats-i-tai</i>	<i>idi-tai</i>
FUTURE	<i>tats-i-gamata</i>	<i>idi-gamata</i>
NEGATIVE	<i>tach-a-n</i>	<i>idi-n</i>
CONTINUATIVE	<i>tat-i-i ui</i>	<i>idi-i ui</i>
MEDIAL	<i>tat-i-i</i>	<i>idi-i</i>

### ***'Base form'***

- ⊙ Natural representative form for a lexeme
- ⊙ Important for theory and description
  - ⊙ Analysis and description are organized around it
    - ⊙ Elicitation: data collection
    - ⊙ Analysis: word formation
    - ⊙ Organization of forms: dictionary
- ⊙ Equally appropriate & important for teaching/learning
  - ⊙ because they are psychologically real and obvious to all speakers

### ***How "base forms" are typically determined***

- ⊙ Morphologically simple (not derived)
- ⊙ Syntactically neutral
  - ⊙ Present tense
  - ⊙ Affirmative
  - ⊙ Independent

***'Base form' for Ikema verbs?***

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***Our experience***

When referring to a verb:

- ◉ Elicitation sessions
- ◉ Personal word lists
- ◉ **MEDIAL** form is most commonly used among the **native speakers**

***Our experience***

- ◉ Interestingly, **researchers & trained speakers** use the **NON-PAST** form
  - ◉ Dictionary / word lists by linguists and more academically inclined speakers
    - ◉ Hirayama 1983
    - ◉ Nevsky 2005
    - ◉ (Nakama 1992-2001)

***'Base' form = representative form??***

- ◉ Linguistic notion of "base form" is **NOT** necessarily a natural part of native speakers' intuition, especially with regard to verbs
- ◉ Appropriate representative forms can be different for different people

***Representative forms for Ikema verb***

- ◉ Ordinary (untrained) speakers: **MEDIAL** form

*Possible factor affecting the choice*

- ◉ Frequency of use: by far the most frequently used verb form in actual discourse

***Representative forms for Ikema verb***

- ◉ Academically inclined: **NON-PAST** form

*Possible factors affecting the choice*

- ◉ Practice in the majority language (Japanese)
- ◉ Academic tradition / Theoretical framework

### ***Implications***

- ⊙ Choice of one representative form over the other is **not a matter of correct or incorrect**
  - ⊙ Choice is **arbitrary** to a degree
  - ⊙ no single universally valid, natural choice

### ***Implications***

- ⊙ Appropriate representative forms can be **different depending on the goal and audience**
  - ⊙ For native Ikema speakers:  
the **MEDIAL form**, rather than the **NON-PAST form**, may make better sense as a representative verb form

### ***Implications***

- ⊙ Potential danger of choosing a form that does not help or even hinder learning
- ⊙ Organization of materials in LD should be **informed by what speakers do** as much as, if not more than, by what linguists do (or would like to see)

### ***References***

- Hirayama, Teruo. ed. 1983. *Ryukyu Miyako shotoo hoogen kiso goi no soogoo-teki kenkyuu*. [A comprehensive study of basic vocabulary in Ryukyu Miyako dialects]. Tokyo: Oofuu-sha
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***Thank you!***